

**COUNCILLOR QUESTIONS**  
**Council – 30<sup>th</sup> March 2023**

No	Received from	Executive Member Responsible	Question	Answer
1	Cllr Peter McEwan 16/03/23	Cllr Graham Lawman	Will the leader request from senior officers any work such as tree cutting, planting, roadworks, and lighting etc that is happening in members wards that ward members are informed beforehand?	The range and volume of activity to keep NNC's green space and infrastructure in good order, makes notifying Members of all activity in their Ward impractical. Where there are significant works taking place, we do notify Ward Members of proposed works, for example the information shared with Ward Members in January this year as part of the Treescape planting programme. Larger highway schemes, such as resurfacing, are communicated to all Members through regular emails and updates; the service will continue with this approach. Information on all roadworks (whether utility providers or highways authority) can also be viewed at the national website: one.network. The Planning Authority is generally not informed of the commencement of works undertaken by developers on private land as there is no legal requirement to do so and therefore this information is not available to share with ward members.
2	Cllr Valerie Anslow 20/03/21	Cllr Scott Edwards	How many families have been fined through the courts for their child's persistent absence from school, when the child in question "can't go to school, not won't go to school," because of anxiety associated with ASD?	Where a young person has a diagnosis of anxiety, evidence to support this would be requested as provided by a medical professional. This could then constitute a statutory defence in relation to the absence from school, and thus no legal action would be taken. No cases have been identified in which a prosecution has been pursued in under these circumstances.

				<p>It should be noted, however, that were unauthorised absences found to be relating to a family holiday taken during term time, then, irrespective of any additional need perceived or otherwise, action would be taken in line with local authority policy and associated legislation.</p> <p>The Council reviews every case individually and considers the appropriateness of any further action it may choose to take. There is clear statutory guidance that covers this area of work, and this forms the basis of the decision-making process. There is no intention to prosecute where there is a genuine, evidenced and statutorily acceptable reason for absence. Ultimately, where a prosecution is made, the courts themselves would review this evidence before making their judgement.</p>
3	Cllr Valerie Anslow 20/03/21	Cllr Matt Binley	<p>Wellingborough has the highest number of rough sleepers and homeless in temporary accommodation in North Northants. Night Shelters were closed three years ago, but the need is growing. When will the council work with the voluntary sector and faith groups to provide a sustainable solution to rough sleeping.</p>	<p>The Council is working very closely with the Voluntary Sector and other statutory partners to reduce rough sleeping, to name just a couple of examples in Wellingborough our rough sleeper team attend weekly sessions at Teen Challenge and the Daylight Centre. There is a multi-agency Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Partnership in place and the partnership has been working in recent months to produce a North Northants Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy which will be coming forward for formal consultation in the next few months. The Council is also committed to increasing the amount of accommodation for rough sleepers and those with multi-exclusion homelessness. There is an ongoing commitment with the Housing Network for the S&amp;H property in Wellingborough until October 2023, which provides supported accommodation. Post this date we will look to re-procure it through the new Dynamic Purchasing Framework we are setting up for</p>

				<p>Temporary Accommodation. NNC is currently delivering against the Government funded Rough Sleeper Accommodation programme to purchase 10 one-bed contained units, of which 7 properties have either been acquired or are ready to complete and will be submitting a bid to the new Government funded Single Homelessness Accommodation programme in the coming months. As previously detailed on the performance indicator reports, we have seen a higher volume of people presenting themselves as rough sleepers in Wellingborough, a number of these individuals are people known to the council from other areas within NNC. This has been attributed to the high volume of TA provision NNC provides in the Wellingborough area, along with the best food provision across the NNC area being provided in Wellingborough by community and faith groups.</p> <p>The new Strategy will enable all partners to work collaboratively on more preventative solutions to homelessness such as working more closely with landlords and tenants through pre-eviction panels and tailoring advice and support for at risk groups.</p>
4	Cllr Valerie Anslow 20/03/21	Cllr David Brackenbury	As the planning authority for North Northants, when will the council take the lead and tell Vistry Group that felling 61 mature trees does not fit in with its corporate vision, and that alternate solutions need to be found for the utility work associated with Stanton Cross SUE.	Irrespective of whether the felling of trees fits with the corporate vision of the Council, North Northamptonshire Council (NNC) is bound by the decisions made by its predecessor authorities. In this case, the developer has planning permission granted by the former Borough Council of Wellingborough (BCW) that enable them to lawfully develop the Stanton Cross SUE. This development will result in the loss of trees as identified in the Environmental Statement that the developer submitted to BCW in support of their planning application. Although NNC has encouraged the developer to reconsider their proposals to minimise tree

				loss, the Council does not have legitimate grounds to prevent the developer from implementing the permission granted by BCW.
5	Cllr Lyn Buckingham 21/03/23	Cllr Matt Binley	Why have many. of the housing related items, been dropped, from the latest Forward plan like the Lawrences Site and Housing pipeline?	There are a number of reports that form part of the wider Housing Strategic Framework: Housing Strategy; the case for social house building; HRA Integration; HRA Business Plan; Housing Development Pipeline. The new AD for Housing will be working with the Executive Member and relevant officer teams to review where the work on this programme has progressed to in order to determine the timelines and order in which these matters will be brought forward to Executive.
6	Cllr Lyn Buckingham 21/03/23	Cllr Matt Binley	Many people are on the waiting list for a Garage, but the council also has large numbers of garages lying empty for one reason or another, when will this council review this asset and invest where needed to bring them back to a standard to let or decommission?	The garages let to Council tenants are funded through the General Fund, not the HRA, with limited budget allocation. A number of units and sites are in disrepair, some with asbestos and other compliance-related issues. Those that are let or are fit to let in the Corby area are being maintained where resource allows and continue to be let. Those that are in disrepair are not being prioritised for repair, as dwellings currently take precedence, given the backlog of responsive repairs the service is tackling. A programme of feasibility studies is underway to assess the garage sites so that informed decisions can be made about future use of these sites, such as conversion to dwellings, use for future housing development, sale or use for other purposes (e.g. resident parking).
7	Cllr Lyn Buckingham 21/03/23	Cllr Matt Binley	Will the council reinstate community walkabouts to identify areas in our communities that need management and ensure that if there are housing management or community safety issues these are identified?	Community walkabouts have been undertaken as part of the Levelling Up Scrutiny Commission and the Safer Streets programme. The Council is exploring options moving forward regards the added value of a establishing a programme of estate walkabouts.